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THE VIRGINIA FRONTIER IN HISTORY—1778

By David I. Bushnell, Jr.

V. THE TREATY OF FORT PITT.

On September 10, 1778, Col. Daniel Brodhead with the Eighth Pennsylvania regiment reached Fort Pitt. The Virginia Commissioners, Andrew and Thomas Lewis, and the three Delaware chiefs, White Eyes, Captain Pipe, and John Killbuck, were awaiting the arrival of the troops, and two days later, September 12, met in council. The fort had, ever since the winter of 1753, been the most important of the frontier posts. Erected by the French, though begun by the Virginians, it was named DuQuesne after the Governor of New France. Before the close of the French and Indian war it had been taken by the British, when its name was changed, later it was occupied by troops of the United States. Here, within the inclosure of the historic post, gathered the commissioners of the newly formed government, and the Chiefs of the Delawares from beyond the Ohio, for the purpose of formulating a treaty of peace and friendship.

Preserved among the miscellaneous papers of the Continental Congress, in the Library of Congress, is a document of the greatest interest: an account of the conferences which resulted in the making and signing of the treaty on September 17. The document is here given in full:

Fort Pitt, Sept. 12th. 1778.

In Council present

The Honourable Andrew Lewis
and
Thomas Lewis

Esqrs Commissioners
the United States

White Eyes
Pipe
John Killbuck

Chiefs of the Delawares

The Honourable Brigadier General MacIntosh, Colns. Brodhead, Gibson, Bayard, Crambray; Majors MacIntosh, Vernon, Amberson, Honoured the Council with their presence(1).

1-Referring briefly to the commissioners, and others mentioned, in this document. Thomas and Andrew Lewis of Virginia, (see notes 13 and 11 of the preceding article of this series).

White Eyes, or *Koquethagechton* was a friend of the whites, and did much to encourage the Moravians in their work among his people. In the spring of 1778 he was presented a silver medal "in the name of Congress." He died of smallpox at Fort Pitt in November 1778.

Pipe, or *Hopocan* ('tobacco pipe') was an hereditary chief of the Wolf division of the Delawares, and was war chief of the tribe. At the close of the French and Indian war he settled with his people on the upper reaches of the Muskingum river, in the present state of Ohio. He was ever influential among his people, and never firm in his friendship for the whites.

Killbuck, or *Gelelemend* ('leader'), was born about 1722, and on the death of White Eyes was chosen acting chief to serve during the minority of the hereditary head of the Turtle, or Unami division of the tribe. He showed great friendship for the whites and joined the Moravian settlement, being baptized *William Henry*. He died in January, 1811.

Gen. Lachlan MacIntosh (see note 3 in the second article of this series, July 1915).

Col. Daniel Brodhead, was appointed in command of the Eighth Pennsylvania regiment March 12, 1777. On October 27, 1779, he was voted the thanks of Congress "for executing (under direction of General Washington) the important expedition against the Mingo and Munsey Indians, and the part of the Senecas on the Allegheny River." Died November 15, 1809.

John Gibson, Lieutenant Colonel Thirteenth Virginia regiment November 12, 1776; Colonel Sixth Virginia regiment October 25, 1777. Transferred to the Ninth Virginia September 14, 1778, and to the Seventh Virginia February 12, 1781. Retired January 1, 1783. Died April 10, 1822.

Stephen Bayard, appointed Major in Eighth Pennsylvania regiment March 12, 1777. Wounded at Brandywine, September 11, 1777, and transferred to the Third Pennsylvania January 1, 1783. Died September 13, 1815.

Chevalier du Crambray, arrived in America with de Carmichael during the month of June 1778. Later he was commander of the artillery in the Department of the West. At the close of the war he was appointed Major in the provincial troops.

Lachlan MacIntosh, Jr., son of Gen. MacIntosh, was appointed first Lieutenant in the First Georgia regiment January 7, 1776. October of the same year he was made Brigade-Inspector.

Frederick Vernon, appointed Major in Eighth Pennsylvania regiment June 7, 1777, and was transferred to the Fourth Pennsylvania January 17, 1871.

William Amberson, of the Eighth Pennsylvania regiment, was wounded at Brandywine, September 11, 1777. He served as aid-de-camp to General Lafayette in 1778 and 1779.

The Commissioners addressed the Chiefs as follows:

Brothers.

The Chief and Wise men of the Delaware Nation.

The Wise men of the United States have sent us to offer you their friendship. You are a Wise people, Listen to what we have to say to you, and that it may sink deep into your hearts, and that you may do so with more attention, we present you with this String.

A String of White Wampum(2).

Brothers.

You know as well as we, that many Treaties that have been held at this and at many other places, with the Six Nations, and Western Indians in order to engage their friendship and peaceable Conduct. These Treaties, however Solemnly Entered into, were no sooner Concluded, but the Indians or some of them Began to Break the peace by Stealing from and Robbing our people. Killing our Women and Children and Committing other Outrageous Acts against the faith of the said Stipulations. You alone of all the Western Indians(3) seem inclined to hold fast the Chain of friendship and even in this instance it has Contracted some Rust, of a very Dangerous Nature. The paths between us are grown up with Bushes, so that they can scarce be seen. They are Bloody, your and our peoples Bones are scattered thro' the Woods, our people Stumble over them. Black Heavy Clouds hang over our heads.

2-True Wampum (the abbreviated form of the New England Algonquian term *wampumpeak*), was made for the most part from the shells of the *Venus mercenaria*. The beads made of this shell were of two colors, white and purple, the latter often shading from violet to almost black. The beads were cylindrical in form, averaging about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch in diameter and $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in length. These were formed into bands resembling belts, often with figures represented in the contrasting color; again they were strung on a single cord. When used ceremonially white expressed peace, friendship, and the like, while the dark beads signified war, hatred, or sorrow. The most famous of all Wampum belts is that which was presented by the Delawares to William Penn in 1682. It is interesting to see how important was wampum in the treaty with the same people nearly a century later. (For an account of Wampum see the article in Handbook of American Indians, Bulletin 30, Bureau of American Ethnology.)

3-The term Western Indians was used in referring to those who lived beyond the Ohio.

Under these unhappy Circumstances we Bid you Welcome to this Council fire; and to Convince you on our parts how desirous we are of Removing these from you and transferring to your and our Enemies, We present you with this Belt of Wampum, by which we open the path between us, once more, and wash away the Blood that has been Spilt on it, we Bury the scattered Bones of our Deceased Relations, and Dispel the Black Clouds, and wipe the tears from your Eyes, we remove all sorrow from your hearts, that joy and the Bright Sun of friendship may shine on you with greater Lustre than ever.

A Road Belt of White Wampum, with a Road and the Thirteen United States and Delaware Nation, Decyphered on each side with Black Wampum.

Brothers.

We told you before that the United States has sent us to you to Offer you their friendship, if you accept the offer, they will Consider you as their own people; they will give you hold of that Bright and Extensive Chain that Unites them to the Great and Powerful King of France, by whose friendship and assistance we hope in a little time to trample all our Enemies under our feet. In Entering into Engagements with the United States nothing will be Required of you but what will be for mutual Good and Happiness, on such principles that if faithfully adhered to, will secure our future peace whilst the Sun or the Earth endures. Influenced by such Motives that the United States stretch out their hands to you—Consider well the offer. It is of great Importance, not only to yourselves, But to your Children and Grand Children. Take time and give your Answer like wise men. We have laid our hearts open to you without Reserve. We expect you will Act with the like Candour and openness of hearts and that you may do so, we present you with this Belt of Wampum.

A Belt of White Wampum with the Thirteen United States and the Delaware Nation lying hold of the same with their hands Decyphered in Black Wampum.

Brothers.

You may Remember that in our letters sent to your Towns(4) (which we presume was the means of the pleasure we now have in Conversing and Consulting with you) we told you that we were Extremely anxious to have such an Opportunity in order to Establish a Mode in the prosecution of the present Expedition against our Common Enemy, as would prove the more Effectual in securing and protecting our wise and good friends amongst you, from the hostile Attempts of those who wish the Destruction of you as well as us. You cannot forget the many threats that have been thrown out against you. We are happy in the present prospect we have not only of Checking, But Chastising our heartless Enemies. In order to Effect this Valuable purpose, evidently Calculated for your immediate protection, Genl. McIntosh, who has the Interest and good of your Nation much at heart, Cannot Reach your and our Enemy, otherwise than by marching his Army thro' your Country, to which (when we consider you as our friends and Allies we presume you can have no Objection, But on the Contrary that you will give him the most evident proofs of your great attachment to our Mutual Interest and that he will not have it to say that he and his men stood in the Gap of Danger, covering your heads without some of you Being Witnesses of his Exertions in Establishing peace and tranquility in this seat of Tyranny, Murder and Rapine(5). We Beg you take under your most serious Consideration this very important matter, and that you will in a friendly, open, and Candid manner, without the least Tincture of Artifice or Disguise give us your Sentiments and that as soon as you can make it Convenient.

A Belt of White Wampum.

Capt. White Eyes, Rose up and made the following Answer. Brothers.

I am greatly Rejoiced to hear what you have now told the few of your Brethren which you now see come for that purpose.

4-George Clymer wrote from Fort Pitt March 7, 1778, and said in part: "I shall of my own Authority send off a Messenger to the Delawares tomorrow, to make known to them the friendly disposition of Congress, to communicate the prosperous Situation of our Affairs, and to invite their principal Men to Fort Pitt * * *." (See the preceding section of this series.)

5-This refers to the British Post at Detroit.

You may Depend on it we shall Consider well what you have said to us and return you an [answer] this Afternoon, as we see you are desirous of proceeding on the Intended Expedition, which we hope will be the means of our living in peace.

Sept. 13th.

In Council.

Capt. White Eyes informed the Commissioners that the Arrival of Nimwha, a Shawnese Chief(6), Capt. Wingeund(7) and some other Delawares, had prevented them from attending yesterday Agreeable to promise, But that they were now Ready, he then addressed the Commissioners in the following Words:

Brothers.

We are greatly Rejoiced to hear the many good things you have said to us; we return you our hearty thanks that you have Renewed and Strengthened the Chain of Friendship which our Wise Forefathers made. We also return you our thanks that you have taken pity on us and have wiped the Tears from our Eyes, that you have set our hearts at Ease, After having in a Brotherly manner Buried the Bones of our Deceased Relations and Removed the Cause of our Grief. Brothers, you desired us to consider well what had been said to us. We now inform you we have done so, as far as we are Capable of judging. But as you are wiser, we hope you will Consider well for us. By so doing it will be for the Advantage of us Both.

A Belt of White Wampum.

Brothers.

It is Customary, when Brethren who Consult the Mutual Interests of their young men, their Women and Children do undertake anything, that Both should join in the work. Yes-

6-The name of Nimwha does not appear on any treaty, nor can it be traced. He appears to have been a man of importance and was probably known by another name.

7-Capt. Wingenund, a War Chief of the Delawares, signed the treaty of Fort McIntosh, January 21, 1785, as Wingenum. His name was also attached to the treaty of Fort Harmar, January 9, 1789, where it appears as Wingenoud. He was a friend of Col. Crawford, and when this officer was about to be burned at the stake he called for the chief, but the latter was unable to obtain his release.

terday you informed us You intended to Clear the path Between us and you. We now inform you that we join you most heartily in the work and nothing shall be wanting on our parts. But should our young men fail in their Attempts we desire you not to Blame us. We have not Concealed any thing from you. The Bad people who have stopped the path Between us shall see us Both hand in hand Repairing it.

A Belt of White Wampum, with a Road
Decyphered in it with Black Wampum.

Brothers.

Yesterday you desired us to take fast hold and join in the Chain of Friendship, which you informed us was Strengthened by the King of France having joined it. Brothers we now inform [you] that we and our Grand Children, the Shawnese(8) of the Maquegea tribe who are Settled with us and Become the same people, have taken fast hold of it, and are determined never to part the hold, tho' we should loose our Lives. We hope while we keep fast hold of it, our Young Men, our Women and Children, will be happy. We have now spoke the Sentiments of our hearts, without Deceit.

A Belt of White Wampum.

The Commissioners then informed the Chiefs that they would Frame the Articles of Confederation, and as soon as they were Ready they would Acquaint them.

Capt. White Eyes then Addressed the Commissioners.

We now are become one people, the Enemy Indians as soon as they hear it will strike us, we desire that our Brethren would Build some place for our Old Men, Women and Children to Remain in Safety whilst our Warriors go with you.

8-The Delaware referred to the other Algonquian tribes as Grandchildren, while the Delaware, "By virtue of admitted priority of political rank and of occupying the central home territory, from which most of the cognate tribes had diverged, they were accorded by all the Algonquian tribes the respectful title of 'grandfather,' a recognition accorded by courtesy also by the Huron. The Nanticoke, Conoy, Shawnee, and Mahican claimed close connection with the Delawares and preserved the tradition of a common origin." (Handbook of American Indians, Bulletin 30, Bureau of American Ethnology.) "Maquegea tribe" refers to one of the five general divisions of the Shawnee, usually designated Mequachake ('red earth.'—Hewitt). Their villages stood on the headwaters of Mad river, in the present Logan county, Ohio, and were destroyed by United States troops in 1791.

14th. Sept.

The Commissioners and Chiefs met, when the Articles of Confederation and Union were Read and Explained to them the Commissioners desired them to Consider them well, if any thing was wanting which they might think of, they would Add it and that when they were Ready they would Return an Answer.

15th. Sept.

The Badness of the Weather prevented a meeting.

16th.

The Commissioners and Chiefs met in Council when Capt. White Eyes addressed the Commissioners.

Brothers.

We have Considered well every thing mentioned in the Confederation, we like them well and we are Ready to join you in every thing therein mentioned. We now inform you that as many of our Warriors as can possibly be spared shall join you and go with you. We are at a loss to express our thoughts. But we hope soon to Convince you by our acts of the Sincerity of our hearts. We desire you not to think any of our people will have any Objection to your Marching thro' our Country, on the Contrary they will Rejoice to see you. We are well pleased to hear that part which Relates to our foolish young Men, in future doing any Mischief to one another. We heartily join in it, and shall fully Comply with it, and should our own Sons offend we shall secure them to be Dealt with Agreeable to the Confederation. We now desire that our Young Men may be made Acquainted with one another and that there may be no Distinction between them.

A String of White Wampum.

Brothers:

You desired us in the speech which you made to us yesterday that if we could think of any thing that might be for the Advantage of Both of us, that we would mention it. We now Request that our Wise Brethren in Congress may be informed that it is our particular Request that Colo. Jno. Gibson may be Appointed to have the Charge of all Matters Between you and us. We esteem him as one of ourselves, he has always acted

an honest part by us and we are Convinced he will make our Common good his chief Study, and not think only how he may Get Rich. We desire also that he may have the Charge and take care of the Warriors of our people who may join you on the present Expedition. When we were last in Philadelphia our Wise Brethren in Congress may Remember we desired them to send Schoolmasters to our Towns to instruct our Children as we think it will be for our Mutual Interest, we Request it may be Complied with.

A Belt of White Wampum.

17th.

The Commissioners and Chiefs met in Council when the Articles of Confederation and Union were again Read and Interpreted, when they were then Asked if they approved of them, to which they Returned for Answer they did and were now come to sign them. A Triplicate then of the Articles of Confederation and Union was signed by the Commissioners and the Chiefs in presence of the Subscribing Evidences, one of which copies was kept by the Commissioners to be sent to the Honble. the Congress, another given to the Chiefs, and a third given to Genl. McIntosh.

The Commissioners then informed the Chiefs that they had a present, which was sent by the Honble. Congress to them as a Testimony of their Regard for them(9) which they should Deliver the next Day to them.

Brigadier General MacIntosh informed the Chiefs that as the Articles of Confederation and Union were now signed by the Commissioners and them he intended to Celebrate the Happy Occassion with a *Feu de joye*. The Troops would parade for that purpose and that he should speak to them.

12 O'Clock A. M.

The Troops prepared on the Common near the Fort and two Field pieces were drawn out on the Occasion, the Genl. and the

9-Congress had, on June 4, "*Resolved* That the Committee of Commerce be directed to procure goods, and such other articles as are proper for presents to the western Indian nations, to the amount of ten thousand dollars, and transmit the same to Fort Pitt, to the commissioners, who are to treat with the Indians there on the 23 day of July next." (See preceding article of this series.)

Commissioners, and the Indian Chiefs on the Green near the Fort, when Capt. White Eyes addressed the General.

Brothers:

I acquainted you some time ago, that the Bad people at Detroit had sent me a Tomhawk desiring me to Strike you with it. As soon as I received it I immediately Acquainted you of it and have Wrapped it up, so that none of my Young Men or my Counsellors have seen it. I now have Brought it here and you may make what use you please of it.

He then threw down on the Ground the two Belts, the one a plain one, the other painted Red with a Tomhawk Decyphered on it(10). Genl. MacIntosh then took up the Belts and informed the Chiefs that he should use them against their Common enemy. The Genl. then Addressed the Chiefs as follows:

Brothers:

I dont love many words, or long and formal talks. We have been too often Cheated by them. The time is now come that Actions alone must declare who are our Friends and who are our Enemies. I have told you already our Fathers the Wise Men of the United States in the great Council Assembled in Congress, have sent me here to protect those whom I find, and will Shew themselves our true and real Friends; and punish those that are our Enemies. And I will not be put off, or deceived by their Offers, or pretences when they see just Vengeance ready to overwhelm them for their wickedness, unless they give Substantial Satisfaction and proofs of their Repentance. We have great patience with those Red Men who were bought like Slaves with a few paultry Goods by the English to strike us. Still wishing them to become wiser; and earnestly desiring that as we grew from the same Ground, so we might be one people, without Regarding Colour. You are a small people. Not a handfull, We wanted to take care of you; and Nurse you, as Women nurse their Children; until you become a great people as we are. You know we are in Number like the

10-It is quite probable the painted belt was sent by the British, together with a tomahawk. The white belt was added by the Delaware Chiefs to show they did not accept the former; that they were the friends of the Americans and repudiated the mission from their enemies. The reference to the tomahawk having been wrapped up, is purely figurative.

stones upon the Ground. And grow every Day more and more. You have heard we have beat the English every where, and almost killed and drove them all off of our land which they wanted to take from us. That the French and Spaniards have now joined us, and beat them on the great Water also, so that they are in Danger of losing their own little Island. Therefore every wise man among you will see as Clear as the sun Shines; that the English cannot keep Detroit, Niagara, and other little places they hold upon the Great Lakes long, nor supply you long with Goods. What then will become of these foolish people who have made us their Enemies without Cause?

Brothers and fellow Warriors of Coshocking(11).

We are at last Angry. You know we have great Reason to be so. I am going soon to your Country with my Warriors. I find your few Towns alone among all the Red people have been wise. Now is the Time to Shew it, by taking up this Hatchet like men determined to be free with us, against all our Enemies and your Enemies. And this Belt to Confirm it, expecting when I go over this River your Warriors will join me, that we may grow great together, and be as one people (as you have declared this Day) Whilst the Sun and Moon Shines or the Waters Run. And I cannot answer for the Conduct of my Warriors towards any who Refuse it.

[End of the Document.]

Attached to the preceding document is a copy of the treaty, which, as stated, was signed in triplicate, one copy being sent to Congress, the second remaining with General McIntosh, and the third being taken by the Delaware chiefs. It is quite evident the copy in question has always been attached to the document, this is shown by many stains which penetrate all the pages. These were probably the papers sent to Congress, and mentioned in the Journal of Congress, October 6, 1778, as follows:

"A letter, of 24 September, from Andrew Lewis and Thomas Lewis, Esqrs, commissioners at Fort Pitt, was read, together with their proceedings at a treaty held with

11-Coshocton, on the site of the present Coshocton, Coshocton county, Ohio, was the most important settlement of the Turtle tribe of the Delawares. It was destroyed by the whites in 1781.

chiefs of the Delaware nation, and an agreement or confederation entered into between them and the said chiefs."

The signatures of the two commissioners, and of the witnesses, likewise the marks of the three Delaware chiefs, as they appear on the copy of the treaty now in the Library of Congress, are shown in the accompanying plate(12). Another copy of the treaty, probably the one retained by General McIntosh, is now preserved in the State Department, Washington. The copy in the Library of Congress is written on both sides of several sheets of paper, but the State Department copy is on one side of large sheets which were joined together so as to present a single surface for the writing. Attached to this copy are the signatures of Joseph L. Finley and John Finley, both captains in the Eighth Pennsylvania regiment who signed as witnesses. Their names do not appear on the Library of Congress copy. The text of the treaty has been given in several official publications, and will not be quoted here.

12-The majority of the names have been included in note 1 of this article, the others may be referred to here:

William Crawford was appointed Lieutenant Colonel of the Fifth Virginia regiment February 13, 1776. Colonel of the Seventh Virginia regiment, August 14, 1776. Resigned March 22, 1777. Later he served on the western frontier and commanded an expedition against the Indians. He was captured, and burned at the stake, in the present Wyandotte county, Ohio, June 11, 1782. (see note 7 above.)

John Campbell, probably the second lieutenant in the Pennsylvania Militia, who was killed in action with the Indians west of the Ohio, June 4, 1782.

John Stephenson, an influential citizen of western Pennsylvania.

Alexander Graham, appointed ensign in the Fifth Pennsylvania Battalion, August 9, 1776. Second lieutenant in Eighth Pennsylvania regiment, July 13, 1777.

Benjamin Mills, First lieutenant Eighth North Carolina regiment, November 28, 1776. Resigned July 12, 1777. Recorded in the Journal of Congress, June 27, 1778, is the recommendation of the Board of War, to Congress, that Benjamin Mills, Lieutenant of the first troop, be granted a commission "in the Corps of North Carolina Light Dragoons," to date from July 16, 1777. The following reference to North Carolina troops at Fort Pitt, appearing in the Journal of Congress, December 5, 1778, is of interest in this connection: "The Board of War being applied to by Captain Medici of the North Carolina dragoons, for direction for his future government, beg leave to state the case of the said troops:

"That from an impracticability to provide for them, they have been hitherto unemployed in the field, except about forty, who were lately compleatly fitted out and sent to Brigadier M'Intosh under Captain Ashe, in expectation that the men whose terms of service were near expiring, would agree to stay two months beyond their time; but on or soon after their arrival at Fort Pitt, their times being expired, all but 14 quitted the service and went home."